

[18 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

not be necessary as they are already required to indicate the "Use before" or expiry date.

Improving Health Infrastructure

2844. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to provide better health facilities to the people in the country;

(b) whether Government proposes to privatise major hospitals in the country for the purpose; and

(c) what other steps are being taken to improve health infrastructure in the country, both in rural and urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Government is continuously taking measures to provide better health facilities to the people in the country.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Creating health infrastructure for providing health care in rural/urban areas is the responsibility of the State Governments. A vast network of rural health infrastructure has been established throughout the country to provide preventive, promotive and curative health care in rural areas. However, Central Government has been making every effort to mobilise substantial resources from bilateral/ multilateral agencies for intensifying the implementation of National Health Programmes namely, the control of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, T.B., Leprosy, Blindness and promotion of Reproductive and Child Health. Besides, for upgrading the rural hospitals in selected States, World Bank assistance has been availed of, which would further improve delivery of health services.

Sale of Blood by IRCS

2845. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item

captioned, "Red Cross to make money from its blood", as reported in the Pioneer dated 14th July, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Red Cross Society has decided to sell blood from its banks;

(c) if so, the details thereof and whether gross irregularities in the distribution of blood by IRCS have come to the notice of Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to streamline the functioning of IRCS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Indian Red Cross Society has not decided to sell blood from its blood bank. The blood is collected by IRCS on voluntary and replacement basis and there is no charge for the blood. However before a safe blood unit is issued to the patient, a number of tests and processes have to be carried out. The IRCS in the first instance, proposes to levy a service charge of Rs. 350/- on this account only from private hospitals and nursing homes.

There is no irregularity in the distribution of blood by IRCS.

(d) Does not arise.

UNAIDS Global Report on HIV/AIDS

2846. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent UNAIDS Global report on HIV/ AIDS Epidemic 2000, saying that 3.1 lakh people had died of AIDS in India in 1999;

(b) if so, how far the report agrees with Government's official figures in this regard;

(c) the Government's reaction thereto, indicating the steps taken to effectively curtail and control the ghastly disease;